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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method of, and apparatus for, automatically determining an electric charge - related characteristic or derived parameter of particles in a dispersion or of a cell wall, comprises having a particle - containing dispersion provided in a cell. The dispersion is illuminated with light from a light source and detecting from a detection volume light scattered from the particles. An electric field is applied to the dispersion at a first frequency of change of direction of the electric field and an electric field is subsequently applied to the dispersion at a second frequency of change of direction of the electric field. First signals detected from the scattered light when the first frequency electric field is applied are used to provide first values related to the velocity distribution of the particles. A second velocity related signal or value derived from scattered light during the time that the second frequency electric field is applied is used to modify the velocity distribution related values to produce a modified particle velocity-related distribution; and the first frequency is low enough to obtain an acceptable resolution of the distribution of particle velocity - related values.

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